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AUTHOR Whitehead, Jack; Delong, Jackie
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ABSTRACT

This paper explains how practitioner researchers can contribute to the knowledge-base of education leadership and administration using the basic self-inquiries "What do we know?" and "How do we know it?" Jackie Delong researched her practice as a school superintendent, and Jack Whitehead researched his as a professional educator in the University of Bath. In their knowledge-creation, they focused on the nature of the living standards of practice and judgment they used to test the validity of their claims to know their educative influence. Such standards are a fundamental part of the creation of their knowledge-base of educational leadership, which can be related directly to the educational practices of superintendents and other educational administrators. Criteria for success in educational leadership include, for Jack Whitehead, the reconstruction of educational theory and educative influence in the learning of other students of education, and for Jackie Delong, her capacity to live her life according to her values, which are her standards of practice and judgment. An appendix contains the proposal both authors successfully submitted to the AERA in August 2000. (Contains 42 references.) (RT)

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Knowledge-Creation in Educational Leadership and Administration Through Practitioner Research.

Jack Whitehead, Department of Education, University of Bath, England.
Jackie Delong, Grand Erie District School Board, Ontario.

Presented at AERA, Seattle, 14th April, 2001

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Knowledge-Creation in Educational Leadership and Administration Through Practitioner Research.

Jack Whitehead, Department of Education, University of Bath, England.
Jackie Delong, Grand Erie District School Board, Ontario.

Presented at AERA, Seattle, 14th April, 2001

In keeping with the conference theme: What do we know? How do we know it?, this paper explains how practitioner researchers can contribute to the knowledge-base of educational leadership and administration. Jackie Delong is a superintendent of schools who is engaged in an action research enquiry into her own learning. (1995-2001). She is explicating the standards of practice and judgement which can be used to test the validity of her knowledge-claims about her educative influence. Jack Whitehead is a university academic who is researching his own supervision of Delong's research programme in relation to the creation of a thesis which demonstrates her originality of mind and critical judgement in contributing to the knowledge-base of educational leadership and administration. We have included as an Appendix the proposal we successfully submitted to AERA in August 2000 so that you can check that we are doing what we said we would do in April 2001, here in Seattle. In this proposal we focus attention on the words of David Clark in an invited address to this Division in 1997.

The honest fact is that the total contribution of Division A of AERA to the development of the empirical and theoretical knowledge base of administration and policy development is so miniscule that if all of us had devoted our professional careers to teaching and service, we would hardly have been missed. (p. 5)

As Jackie's supervisor, Jack had suggested they attend this session because its focus, on the search for authentic educational leadership in schools and universities, appeared relevant to Jackie's research. We shared our mixed emotions after the session. We felt exhilarated by his conclusion that more research was needed by practitioners into their own practice. We felt saddened by the poignancy of seeing a committed researcher looking back on his life-time's commitment to a field of educational enquiry with a feeling of some despair. We both expressed the hope that our collaboration might lead to a more hopeful conclusion!

In relation to the proposals of our co-presenters we were stimulated by Starratt's (2001) *'the question whether democratic leadership theory is thereby defeated, or rather, significantly chastened'*. He goes on to ask whether democratic theory may overcome its own contradictions through a self-consciously ironic pragmatism. We are hoping to contribute to such enquiries through the creation of living educational theories of educational leadership. We intend to make our contribution from the ground of our research-based professionalism of collaboration in our work as professional educators in a School Board and a University.

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Like McIntyre and Cole (2001) we believe that:

"Performance of the research text is an embodiment and representation of the inquiry process as well as a new process of active learning. The possibility of active learning in each performance or recreation of the text exists through our ongoing commitment to maintaining the conditions of our relationship. Each performance is an experiential basis for reflection, analysis, and learning because in relationship we are 'participants-as-collaborators' (Lincoln, 1993, p.42). Together we were able to draw out each other's knowledge and strength." (p.22)

Hence we are video-taping ourselves to help our learning to move forward as we reflect on our experience.

Our research takes place in four contexts. Jackie researches her practice as a Superintendent in the Grand Erie District Board in Ontario. Jack researches his practice as a professional educator in the University of Bath. We come together as researcher and supervisor at the University of Bath and as collaborative researchers at the American Educational Research Association.

Again we agree with McIntyre and Cole (2001, p.23), in terms of our collaborative relationship. It has developed through mutual trust, respect, and care. We recognise that there are risks inherent in any collaborative self-study (Lomax, Evans, Parker and Whitehead, (1999) that require particular attention.

In our knowledge-creation we are focusing on the nature of the living standards of practice and judgement we use to test the validity of our claims to know our educative influence. Such standards are a fundamental part of the creation of our knowledge-base of educational leadership which can be related directly to the educational practices of superintendents and other educational administrators.

The developing epistemology of my practice as superintendent: Jackie's story.

I want to take you immediately into an aspect of my practice through a video-clip of a meeting in which it is being assessed by the principals and vice-principals in a process of democratic accountability. I will explain the significance of this form of accountability as my story unfolds below.

The italicised paragraphs which follow are taken from a re-draft of the Abstract I worked on, following a conversation Jack. These will be referred to later.

This story is concerned with the creation and testing of my own living theory of my learning about my educative influence as a superintendent of schools, an educational leader and insider researcher (Anderson & Herr, 1999) living in turbulent times - 1995-2001. It is a journey of professional learning and self-discovery through research-based professionalism as I ask, research and answer the question, 'How can I improve my

practice as a superintendent of schools in a southern Ontario school district? (Whitehead, 1989).

It represents and demonstrates my originality of mind and critical judgment as I describe and explain my living standards of practice that can be understood through my values for which I hold myself accountable. My originality of mind is being expressed through narrative and image-based forms of communication (Prosser, 1998; Mitchell & Weber, 1999) in which I describe and explain stories of myself, a self–discovery of my need for internal and external dialogue, of how I hold together continuously in a living, dynamic way, a plurality of actions. I describe and explain my work in my many portfolios including the birth and growth of an action research movement in a school system that is restructuring amidst the impact of economic rationalist policies.(Whitty, 1997)

This story serves to focus my critical judgements on the clarification and use of the values that have emerged in my practice as I am able to construct and deconstruct the transformations that have taken place over the five years of the research and to understand what has moved me forward. The meaning of those values that I am articulating are grounded in my practice and constitute my living standards of practice and judgment in my explanations. They emerge through reading, dialogue and reflection on my experience as I account for myself in my practice by continuously moving forward while holding on to the sanctity of personal relationships and democratic evaluation within a hierarchical system and power relations.

My contribution to the scholarship of enquiry emerges from my storying and re-storying, my dialectical and dialogical processes and an analysis and synthesis through the writing of my thesis. One of the obstacles to this clarity is that I take much of my political *nous* as natural and so embedded in the way that I do my work that it has been very difficult to uncover. My process of learning, as distinctive as fingerprints, (MacBeath 2001) emerges from stories of victory and ruin (MacLure, 1996) of my various roles in the school board-senior management relationship, in my family of schools and systems portfolios and in my relationships imbued with life-affirming energy (Whitehead, 1999) and vitality (Tillich, 1952) as I contribute to the education of social formations.

Given the constraints of time and space in this form of presentation I will concentrate on my commitment to values of democratic and non–hierarchical relations and improving teaching/ learning/ schools and school systems. My purpose in doing this is show that my values are the living standards of practice and judgement I use to test the validity of my knowledge-creation as an educational leader and a superintendent of schools.

1) Democratic and Non–Hierarchical Relations

I want to refer you back to the video-tape in which I claim that I can be seen living democratic values in my evaluation of my influence and effectiveness as a Superintendent. I now want to consider:

i) Living democratic values with principals and vice-principals in my family of schools.

This shows my family of schools principals' evaluation of my performance coordinated by two veteran principals in the families, Lorne Berry (1995-1997) and Keith Quigg (1998-2000). I wanted to learn from my principals and vice-principals what I could do to improve my practice as a superintendent through a democratic evaluation process. In addition, I want to contribute to the education of social formations (Delong & Whitehead, 2000) by breaking down the hierarchical structures in the system so that principals engage their staffs in creating learning organizations (Senge, 1990) where they can learn from their teachers and teachers can share the responsibility for the learning in the classroom with their students. In the video that I directed and produced, "Improving Schools Through Action Research" (Delong & Wideman, 1997), Tom Russell said,

> *"there is a certain discomfort in discovering that you could have been doing something better....(He's) always struck by how the students in a classroom can be critical friends. They seem to know what it's safe to say to a teacher and what is not. The saddest part of teaching perhaps is when the teacher never asks at all."*

ii) Living democratic values with Cheryl Black.

Cheryl Black, a secondary school music teacher and a teacher I have been coaching in the action research process, presented her paper *'Valuing The Student Voice in Improving My Practice'* at the Ontario Educational Research Council (OERC) on December 3, 1999. I felt my educative influence as she said, *"This group of students and I, are partners in the learning process and I now feel accountable to them for the quality of work I do."*. She was also submitting to democratic evaluation with her students and together they were creating an environment for sharing and learning:

> *Somewhere in the midst of our daily routine, my students have found the confidence to be honest with me, and, somewhere in the same place, I have found the courage to be honest with my students. We have all grown and been changed by our connections. Some might argue that the time we spend building relationships in our classroom would have been better spent in more structured learning, however, Glasser(1993) believes that "the better we know someone and the more we like about what we know, the harder we will work for that person."(30) My students are demonstrating "conscience of membership".(Green, 1985) They are accountable to each other rather than only to me. In fact, they discipline and support themselves thus creating a partnership of learning rather than a 'teacher-down' approach. They have improved their singing ability and learned a great deal about music, in general. However, I maintain that the ability to build honest and healthy relationships is a skill that is only developed in unique circumstances and, it is impossible for either the teacher or the learner to remain unchanged.* (Black, 1999)

iii) Living democratic values in response to imposed standards of professional practice.

An earlier paper on *'Continuously regenerating developmental standards of practice in teacher education: a cautionary note for the Ontario College of Teachers'* represents my response to an imposition of checklist types of performance review procedures that is contrary to my value of research-based professionalism in which teachers take responsibility for their learning and improvement. I actively encourage teachers and administrators to take control of their learning through action research (Barkans, MacDonald & Morgan, 1996; Black, 1997). Further evidence of this encouragement can be found in my performance reviews of principals which I have their permission to share (Rasokas, 2000; Quigg, 2000).

2) Commitment To Improving Teaching/ Learning/ Schools and School Systems: Living values of connectedness to improving students' learning through mobilising system's influences.

i) Linking policy to practice in supporting parental involvement

Even prior to my being appointed superintendent, Peter Moffatt, Director of Education, and I shared the belief that increasing parental involvement in students learning would increase achievement. Since 1992 we had been looking for avenues to increase parental and community involvement in schools. In 1996, we published a summary of our activities designed toward *'Building a Culture of Involvement in Brant County'* in ORBIT Vol. 27, No. 4 1996. I had just spent a year implementing the new School Councils and brought that recent experience to the article.

ii) Linking action research and provincial test results to improving student learning

By the end of 2000, the year-long project for the Educational Quality and Accountability Office managed by Ron Wideman, Diane Morgan, Kathy Hallett and I *An Action Research Approach to Improving Student Learning Using Provincial Test Results* was finally submitted and approved. In it, teachers and consultants from my board and the Nipissing- Parry Sound Catholic District School Board explained how they used their provincial test results to inform an investigation of ways to improve their teaching and student learning through an action research process. My role was encouragement, support and editing; my friend, Diane Morgan, educational consultant, was the project coordinator.

There were some important ways in which I was influential. It is important to integrate into accounts those sometimes tense and difficult experiences which are often part of projects designed to improve learning. I insisted on the research questions containing "I" as essential to the process. Against some resistance from the University of Nipissing I persisted in supporting the teachers' views that their names and photos should be

included with their work. On the other hand, I was not able to resist a common format to the narratives and my involvement in a separate literature search which seemed to me to be separated from the process of the enquiry. Partnerships are about give and take. The teachers' findings about effective teaching and learning strategies in their classrooms were, to me, inspirational. Several of the narratives have been published in full in the Ontario Action Researcher (www.unipissing.ca/oar) and have been presented in the board and at the Ontario Educational Research Council. The teachers recorded their beliefs that having gone through this process their teaching improved, the students' learning improved and that this had a positive impact on the test results the following year. The improved test results tend to support the teachers' beliefs.

iii) Linking action research and leadership programmes to improving student learning

One way of improving teaching/learning/schools and school systems is to improve the quality of leadership programmes. When it became evident to me that Jack's message of accreditation for action research was beginning to take root and knowing that one of the skills essential for being an effective school administrator is the capacity to analyze and use data to improve student achievement I created and implemented (1999-2001) the GEDSB-Brock University M.Ed. program with Susan Drake and Michael Manley-Casimir. Jack and I have also been instructors of the program. One of my priorities in this program was that the research would be conducted in our schools and improve the learning of our children.

One of the students Bob Ogilvie (2000), wrote a paper for the Reflective Practice course that Susan and I taught *'Cohort Story: Re-Searching Together'* that describes their experience. It is mostly a victory narrative but the idea of the university as vampire, sucking the life-blood of the teacher-researchers (MacLure, p.283,1996) became evident in the ethical review process. I am meaning this in the sense that the institutional power relations worked in ways which pressured the teachers to distort their knowledge. This exerted pressure to conform to scholarly standards of judgement which were not created from the disciplines of educational practice (Lyotard, 1984, p. 63). In September, 2001, there will potentially be fifteen contributions to the knowledge base of teaching and learning from practitioner-researchers.

iv) Linking my performance appraisals to evaluating my influence on improving student learning.

In my thesis I cite my performance reviews by Peter Moffatt (1995-2001) as evidence of evaluations of my influence on teaching and learning and school improvement. These reviews have been presented to the School Board. The reviews inform my planning to improve my practice for the following year and over the six years show clearly my own commitment to an action research process and contain evidence that I am enhancing my educative influence in the system.

v) Linking my research and writings to influencing the knowledge-base of educational leadership and school systems

One of the ways I intend to influence school systems is through my research and writing. In this paper for the 2001 Annual Meeting of AERA in Seattle, *'Knowledge-Creation in Educational Leadership and Administration Through Practitioner Research.'* I want to get my insider, practitioner knowledge into the knowledge base of educational administration. I want to do this so that school and system leaders can see that they can create their own living theories of educational leadership and can also develop their own living standards of practice. I want to build the bridge between theory and practice that Joseph Murphy (1999) said that no one was interested in building.

The supervisor's influence on Delong's inquiry: Jack's story.

One of my pleasures in supervision is at the time when the researcher forms a clear abstract of the thesis which draws attention to the way in which the researcher's originality of mind and critical judgement have engaged with the knowledge-base of the field of inquiry. For me, the definition of what counts as a contribution to knowledge is essentially related to how the researcher's originality of mind and critical judgement has enabled questions of the kind, 'How do I improve my practice?' to be asked, researched and answered in the course of the enquiry. Because of the importance of this definition I want to focus, through a video-clip on my influence in the expression and communication of Jackie's definition of how her originality of mind and critical judgement have been expressed in the process of her knowledge-creation in educational leadership and administration.

In the video-clip I am focusing attention on my frustration in not being able to understand clearly how Jackie's Abstract below is focusing on her originality of mind and critical judgement. I am saying that I feel sure that the separate components, that I can see in the Abstract, will constitute a Ph.D. Thesis but that I can't see how Jackie has shown her readers that she is meeting standards of originality of mind and critical judgement. I want to explain my educative influence in relation to the transformations between the Abstracts.

Jackie's Abstract 9th March 2001

This thesis is a journey of professional learning, reinvention and self-discovery through research-based professionalism in asking the question, 'How do I improve my practice as a superintendent of schools in a southern Ontario school district?' It represents and demonstrates my originality of mind and critical judgment as I describe and explain my living standards of practice for which I hold myself accountable.

The values that I am articulating are grounded in my practice, in what I know from reading and dialogue, from experience and from reflecting on that experience. Through writing about my values that emerge in my practice, I am able to construct

and deconstruct the transformation that has taken place over the six years of the research and to understand what has moved me forward.

Through narrative and image-based research I describe and explain the birth and growth of an action research movement in a school system that is restructuring amidst the negative pressures of market policies.

Jackie's Abstract 12th March 2001 following conversation with Jack on the morning of 12th March (The abstract also appears above in Jackie's story and is repeated here to help the comparision between the two abstracts)

This story is concerned with the creation and testing of my own living theory of my learning about my educative influence as a superintendent of schools, an educational leader and insider researcher (Anderson & Herr, 1999) living in turbulent times - 1995-2001. It is a journey of professional learning and self-discovery through research-based professionalism as I ask, research and answer the question, 'How can I improve my practice as a superintendent of schools in a southern Ontario school district? (Whitehead, 1989).

It represents and demonstrates my originality of mind and critical judgment as I describe and explain my living standards of practice that can be understood through my values for which I hold myself accountable. My originality of mind is being expressed through narrative and image-based forms of communication (Prosser, 1998; Mitchell & Weber, 1999) in which I describe and explain stories of myself, a self–discovery of my need for internal and external dialogue, of how I hold together continuously in a living, dynamic way, a plurality of actions. I describe and explain my work in my many portfolios including the birth and growth of an action research movement in a school system that is restructuring amidst the impact of economic rationalist policies.(Whitty, 1997)

This story serves to focus my critical judgements on the clarification and use of the values that have emerged in my practice as I am able to construct and deconstruct the transformations that have taken place over the five years of the research and to understand what has moved me forward. The meaning of those values that I am articulating are grounded in my practice and constitute my living standards of practice and judgment in my explanations. They emerge through reading, dialogue and reflection on my experience as I account for myself in my practice by continuously moving forward while holding on to the sanctity of personal relationships and democratic evaluation within a hierarchical system and power relations.

I want to establish that I have had an educative influence on Jackie's knowledge-creation in relation to the expression of her originality of mind and critical judgement in the movement between the meanings of the two Abstracts. I also want to offer an explanation grounded in my values below, for this educative influence, in a way which is open to public testing.

The main difference between the 'wo abstracts for me, is that Jackie has now clearly explained to her readers what she considers to be the expression of her originality of mind and critical judgement. Along with 'the extent and merit of the work' these constitute the standards of judgment used by examiners of Ph.D. Theses at the University of Bath. In relation to her originality of mind Jackie is clear that:

My originality of mind is being expressed through narrative and image-based forms of communication (Prosser, 1998; Mitchell & Weber, 1999) in which I describe and explain stories of myself, a self–discovery of my need for internal and external dialogue, of how I hold together continuously in a living, dynamic way, a plurality of actions.

In relation to her critical judgement she is clear that:

This story serves to foc us my critical judgements on the clarification and use of the values that have emerged in my practice as I am able to construct and deconstruct the transformations that have taken place over the five years of the research and to understand what has moved me forward. The meaning of those values that I am articulating are grounded in my practice and constitute my living standards of practice and judgment in my explanations.

The explanation of my educative influence on Jackie's originality of mind and critical judgement is grounded in my 'embodied values'. I want to focus your attention on the way my values constitute my living standards of practice and judgement which can be used to test the validity of such explanations.

In relation to my educative influence on Jackie's critical judgements I want to focus on her living values of connectedness to improving students' learning through mobilising system's influences.

Here are some moments to share on the video-clip of 20th March where I am focusing attention on Jackie's capacity to relate her embodied values of students' learning to her understanding of how to influence system responses to support students' learning.

In the lead up to this conversation,on Thursday 15th March Jackie showed me an e-mail she had received, the day before, from Carolijn MacNeil, a teacher in the GEDSB.

"I talked to John Verbakel and I emailed Dave Abbey. Now ....it was like magic!!. All of a sudden I was swept up by the action research SWAT team. James Ellsworth called me and asked me to be part of a portfolio team receiving funding for action research. Several special dates were discussed where training would be given and opportunities to share with other practitioners given. Dave Abbey emailed me back with all sorts of suggestions. Lynn Abbey phoned and agreed to be my "Critical friend" or

Mentor as we like to call it. John agreed to let me go on several PD days for my project. I knew that I was in a learning curve here and it is really exciting. I am going to really think things through before I meet with Lynn on Monday.

What impassions me about portfolios? I have the boxes set up in my room and each of my students have a file folder. What is the deal here? I know all I have heard from colleagues in the past is that portfolios do not work. They are a pain.. Why do I refuse to listen to this banter. Why am I so excited to try them in my academic class? Where will I start. What type of portfolio will it be? What purpose will they serve. What do I want from my students. How will the portfolios fit in naturally with the classroom work? I know one thing : I want my students to take more responsibility for their learning. I want them to use suggestions that I give to revise reflect and modify but how does one do this? I think I will discuss some of this with Lynn."

My first response was to feel Jackie's pleasure in the affirmation she felt that her work was being appreciated and used. My second was to share the laughter about the idea of an action research SWAT team! The e-mail kept coming into my mind as having something significant to say about Jackie's system's influence. So did ideas from Edward Said (p. xii-xiii) about culture and from Bourdieu (p. 91,1992) about the habitus which influences the reproduction of social formations. My intuition began working on the idea that this e-mail was showing Jackie's *system's* influence' as having pervaded the culture of the board. I mean this in the sense that her influence was being felt through the actions of others who had been directly influenced by Jackie, in face to face communications.

In the video-clip I can be seen and heard, raising the idea of Jackie's influence on a 'system'. Jackie's story above shows that she has integrated her response to the conversation in the section on **commitment to improving teaching/ learning/ schools and school systems**. The crucial point about my influence is that I think that I have raised Jackie's awareness of something she has taken for granted and yet which is crucially important for her knowledge-creation in relation to explaining her educative influence as a superintendent. I am thinking of her capacity to hold together and dynamically relate, her focus on improving students' learning with her understandings of how to mobilise system's influence in support of the processes of improving student learning.

I now want to focus attention on the 'embodied' values I believe that I express in my educative relationships and which can help to explain the nature of my educative influence in the processes of knowledge-creation with Jackie and the other practitioner-researchers whose research programmes I supervise. I think my embodied values are explanatory principles because my experience of their negation is sufficient reason for me to explain my actions as I seek to live my values more fully in my practice. I think my values are the standards of practice and judgement I use in

accounting/explaining to myself and others how I live my values more fully in my practice.

I am hopeful that we are both expressing in our own ways, in ways which can be further revealed in the video-tapes of our presentation, the embodied values we use to explain our educative influence. I see us both wanting to explain our embodied knowledge as educational researchers in which we are working to contribute to the knowledge base of our vocations in education.

My embodied values as explanatory principles

In my explanations for my educative influence my values constitute the reasons for why I do things. I think of my values as embodied in what I do. They form the goals I set for myself in living a productive life. I often feel a desire to resolve a tension when I experience the denial of values such as freedom, care, compassion, justice and inquiry and explain my actions in terms of my desire to live my values as fully as possible.

Here are some of the values I think I embody in my educative relationships. Let me see if I can share their meanings in a way which enables you to use them as standards of judgement for testing the validity of my explanations of my educative influence.

A life-affirming faith in the embodied knowledge and knowledge-creating capacities of practitioner researchers.

As an educator, supporting the educational enquiries of practitioner-researchers I hold firmly to the view that the practitioner-researchers already embody much of the knowledge which the research can make public. In saying this I don't want to be misunderstood. I see the practitioner–researcher embodying the knowledge I want to help to make public. In the process of working on ways of communicating the embodied knowledge in enquiries of the kind, 'How do I improve what I am doing?', I see knowledge-creation at work. The way I communicate this valuing of the 'embodied knowledge' and knowledge-creating capacities of practitioner-researchers has been reflected back to me by Robyn Pound a researcher who transcribed the following from one of our conversations from 1996:

Robyn Pound - *Here is an example of an affirming experience which encouraged me to give credit to my own voice. After a presentation I made during my first year, Jack Whitehead replied by saying:*

'At the moment the power behind what counts as knowledge is in the academy. It is not in the form of knowing that you have. I genuinely believe that you have the form of knowledge that I am interesting in helping to make public.... If we to take the view that you are starting to work with parents of young children and that the 'knowing' they have is developmental. It's emergent, but never-the-less is actually superior to the 'knowing' that is in the academy at the moment about what you are interested in. You

would have the personal and professional knowledge together (parents and me). We (the academy) would be the learners. Over a few years our task would be to learn what it is for you and your parents to become good parents with your help and support. We would be subordinate, in terms of our learning, to the personal and professional knowledge which you and the parents actually have as you are working with the child to become better parents.' (Taped presentation, meeting at the University of Bath 7.10.96).

I think that I carry this belief of mine as an 'embodied value' of my own which I think communicates to Jackie, and other practitioner-researchers I work with, a passionate valuing of their 'embodied knowledge' and 'knowledge-creating' capacities. With working in education I think the emotional intensity of my commitment carries the additional meaning that in creating publicly shareable knowledge, from and in their practice, they are also creating themselves. I am meaning this in the sense of exercising some originality and critical judgement in the creation of our own forms of life in our educational enquiries. This is why I value what I do in education and educational research so highly.

Communicating a life-affirming energy

In the face of the certainty of death I feel a life-affirming energy which I associate with Bataille's (1962, p. 11) idea of assenting to life up to the point of death and with Foucault's (1985, p. 89) ideas on the uses of pleasure. In my educative relationships I feel alive in a way which I believe communicates both a life-affirming energy and pleasure. I am stressing the pleasure associated with my life-affirming energy because I believe that it is crucial in explaining my educative influence in the processes of knowledge-creation with practitioner-researchers. Let me see if the words loving and creative spirit carry any meaning for you. I do believe this pleasure and energy has a spiritual ground in the experience of the state of being grasped by the power of being itself. Paul Tillich's (1952) work on the Courage to Be, helped me to articulate this point. I don't want to say anything more about this spiritual value, embodied in my practice. I simply want to acknowledge its presence and hope that you can feel this spiritual, life-affirming energy through my relationship with you.

Engaging with the life-affirming energy of practitioner researchers

As I engage with the life-affirming energy of others, in my educative relations, I think of education in terms of forms of enquiry through which we create our own forms of life in relation to the certainty of death and other influences. I associate the 'giving of form' with my aesthetic values. I think of the art of living in terms of giving form to life itself and I seek to express my value-laden practices as an educator and educational researcher in a way in which you will experience as aesthetic in the sense that I can be seen to be influencing the educational development of myself and others in ways which are assisting in the creation of a form of life. When I say this I do not want to be understood as saying that I have educated anyone other than myself. Because I associate education with learning and knowledge-creation I think each

individual makes sense of their own experience in a way which is uniquely their own through an engagement with their imagination and creativity. I do however think that I can claim to have an educative influence. In this presentation I am seeking to bring into my claims to educational knowledge a form of aesthetic knowing which is focused on the expression of an influence within the creative formation by another of their own form of life.

Sharing insights from passionate educational enquiries.

I know that I have an enthusiasm for sharing insights from the work of others that are influencing my own enquiries and which may be relevant to the enquiries of others. So, as I seek to share my insights with Jackie I am focusing on a creative and critical engagement with the ideas of culture from Edward Said (p, xii-xiii, 1993) and the ideas of a 'logic of practice' and the 'habitus' from Pierre Bourdieu (p.91, 1992).

As we work at improving our contributions to the knowledge-base of educational leadership and administration we want to share our own insights, in a process of democratic accountability, about both our success criteria and the evidence we use to judge our success.

Jack's success criteria

We want to end our presentation by re-visiting David Clark's statement that:

The honest fact is that the total contribution of Division A of AERA to the development of the empirical and theoretical knowledge base of administration and policy development is so miniscule that if all of us had devoted our professional careers to teaching and service, we would hardly have been missed. (Clark, 1997, p. 5*)*

In an attempt to avoid such a retrospective analysis of one's productive life we want to offer for your evaluation the success criteria and evidence we use to judge our own contributions to our chosen profession, education.

Jack's criteria are focused on both the reconstruction of educational theory and his educative influence in the learning of other students of education. He wants to look back on a productive life in education with the knowledge that he has contributed to the development of living forms of educational theory which can be related directly to the education of individuals and to the education of social formations. He offers as partial evidence of his success as a supervisor so far, the following living theory theses and dissertations from the living theory section of actionresearch.net:

EDUCATIONAL KNOWLEDGE-CREATORS
1995-2000

Austin, T. (2001) Treasures in the Snow: What do I know and how do I know it through my educational inquiry into my practice of community? Ph.D. Thesis, University of Bath. In the Living Theory section of http://www.actionresearch.net
Adler-Collins, J. (2000) ***A Scholarship of Enquiry***, M.A. dissertation, University of Bath. Cunningham, B. (1999***) How do I come to know my spirituality as I create my own living educational theory?*** Ph.D. Thesis, University of Bath.
D'Arcy, P. (1998) ***The Whole Story…..*** Ph.D. Thesis, University of Bath.
Eames, K. (1995) ***How do I, as a teacher and educational action-researcher, describe and explain the nature of my professional knowledge?*** Ph.D. Thesis, University of Bath
Finnegan, J. (2000) *How do I create my own educational theory as an action researcher and as a teacher?* Ph.D. submission, University of Bath, under examination.
Holley, E. (1997) *How do I as a teacher-researcher contribute to the development of a living educational theory through an exploration of my values in my professional practice?* M.Phil., University of Bath.
Hughes, J. (1996) *Action planning and assessment in guidance contexts: how can I understand and support these processes while working with colleagues in further education colleges and career service provision in Avon.* Ph.D. Thesis, University of Bath.
Laidlaw, M. (1996) *How can I create my own living educational theory as I offer you an account of my educational development?* Ph.D. thesis, University of Bath.
Loftus, J. (1999) *An action enquiry into the marketing of an established first school in its transition to full primary status.* Ph.D. thesis, Kingston University.
Evans, M. (1995) *An action research enquiry into reflection in action as part of my role as a deputy headteacher.* Ph.D., Kingston University
Whitehead, J. (1999) *How do I improve my practice? Creating a discipline of education through educational enquiry.* Ph.D. University of Bath.

Jackie's success criteria

I judge my success in terms of my capacity to live my life according to my values which are my standards of practice and judgment. As I attempt to share my embodied knowledge with clarity and elegance, I find that the meanings of my standards are still emerging through the writing of the thesis: the sanctity of personal relationships, the focus on children, democratic and non–hierarchical relations, commitment to improving teaching / learning /schools and school systems, encouraging practitioner knowledge through action research, and professional accountability. And, as I have written every year in my goal package: Finding the meaning of balance. I do not want to end my professional life feeling as David Clark did; I do wish to contribute to improving the social order (McNiff, 1992) through the education of social formations.

What is the evidential base that I am living these standards of practice and judgment? First, the answer lies in the data archive of the five years of research that describes and explains the knowledge embodied in my practice. Second, the evidence that the meanings of the standards have emerged through my practice is in my draft Ph.D. submission to the University of Bath. It is my hope that this Ph.D. Thesis can join those in the living theory section of actionresearch.net – soon!

Appendix

The motivation to write this paper came from the disturbing experience of hearing David Clark (1) say in an invited address to Division A at AERA near the end of his life that:

The honest fact is that the total contribution of Division A of AERA to the development of the empirical and theoretical knowledge base of administration and policy development is so miniscule that if all of us had devoted our professional careers to teaching and service, we would hardly have been missed. (p. 5)

In setting out our answers to the questions, what do we know and how do we know it?, we recognise that our contributions to knowledge of educational administration are being made in relation to:

- the context of paradigm proliferation (2,3,4):
- the need for alignment of theory and practice in educational administration research (5,6)
- calls for new epistemologies of scholarship and practice (7,8).

This longitudinal study of a superintendent's educative influence and knowledge-creation takes place over 6 years and begins with her appointment in 1995. It includes an analysis of the changing political ideology in Ontario with the implementation of explicitly economic rationalist policies from the change in government in June 1996. The analysis examines the evolving knowledge-base of the educational administrator in relation to a restructuring of school boards, changes in the superintendent's portfolios, and radical changes in the provincial curriculum and assessment procedures. Her system portfolios include:

1. Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting,
2. Community Relations and Career Education,
3. Staff Development,
4. Leadership and Communications.

The research approach draws on the use of story advocated by Carter (9) and Anderson and Page (10) and includes Connelly and Clandinin's (11) ideas on the shaping of professional identity through stories of educational practice.

The study of the supervisor's practice is focused on his educative influence as he disciplines his educational enquiry, 'How do I help you to improve your learning?' in relation to the administrator's originality of mind and critical judgement. These are the two fundamental standards of judgement which must be met in the superintendent's knowledge-creation for the award of a Ph.D. by the University of Bath.

In researching his own practice the supervisor focuses his analysis on his influence on the emergence of the meanings of the standards of practice which define the evolution of knowledge of what it means to be a superintendent. These are also the standards of judgement used by the superintendent to test the validity of her claims to knowledge of educational administration (Delong & Wideman, 12,13).

The meanings of the standards of judgement are clarified in the course of their emergence and clarification over 6 years of practical and theoretical activity by the superintendent and supervisor of the research. Unlike the linguistic lists of standards of practice published by professional bodies such as the Ontario College of Teachers in Ontario (14) and the Teacher Training Agency in England, the standards of practice embodied in the Superintendent's form of life, are the values she uses to give meaning and purpose to her professional activities (15). One of these values involves democratic forms of evaluation and accountability within which she submits herself and her accounts of her learning to the group of principals and vice-principals in her family of schools. The presentation will include video-clips of such accountability to 'show' the meanings of democratic accountability in her educative relations with the principals and vice-principals drawn from the 11 elementary schools and five secondary schools, one of which is a medium security prison.

Both authors are members of the self-study of teacher education practices (S-STEP) SIG of AERA. They use an action research methodology which includes action reflection cycles and the submission of their explanations of their own learning to the rational control of a validation group (16,17,18). They will present their own living educational theories (19,20,21) of educational leadership and administration in terms of the emerging and evolving standards of practice and judgement which define the field of their research into the knowledge-base of educational administration and leadership.

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